

House Republican Press Release

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Rep. Farr to McDonald: End Power Struggle with Justice Sullivan



Noting that the state legislature and the state's Judicial branch have traditionally sought to avoid clashes and to resolve their differences amicably, state Representative Bob Farr today urged the Senate co-chairman of the General Assembly's Judiciary Committee to stop trying to force former Supreme Court Chief Justice William J. Sullivan to testify before the panel.

Representative Farr, R-19th District, the Judiciary Committee's House Ranking Member, today sent a letter to state Senator Andrew J. McDonald, the committee's co-chair, urging him to withdraw a request that a Superior Court judge reconsider his earlier decision to prevent the panel from compelling Sullivan to testify on why he delayed the release of a controversial state Supreme Court ruling.

The Judiciary Committee had scheduled a hearing for June 27th in which Sullivan would have been grilled on his reasons for delaying the release of a controversial court ruling earlier this year. Sullivan allegedly delayed releasing the decision in an effort to help Justice Peter Zarella avoid criticism during legislative hearings on his nomination to become the new chief justice of the state Supreme Court.

McDonald, D-27th District, and the committee's House co-chair, state Representative Michael P. Lawlor, D-99th District, cancelled the hearing after learning that Waterbury Superior Court Judge Dennis Eveleigh had quashed a subpoena that would have compelled Sullivan to appear before the committee and testify on the matter.

Three other justices, including Zarella, Acting Chief Justice David Borden and Justice Richard Palmer, have agreed to appear before the committee.

"I recently read that you have requested that Judge Eveleigh reconsider his decision to quash the subpoena that you and Representative Lawlor issued to former Chief Justice Sullivan. I urge you to withdraw this request," Representative Farr said in his letter to McDonald.

"As you know, the legislature and the Judicial branch have traditionally sought to avoid conflict and have amicably resolved their differences. I believe that we should continue to do so," Representative Farr wrote. "If you feel the need to proceed with your investigation into Justice Sullivan's conduct, then you should schedule a hearing for those justices who have voluntarily agreed to testify before the Judiciary committee."

"After their testimony, it may become evident that further testimony from former Chief Justice Sullivan is unnecessary. I do not believe that any purpose is served by escalating

further this power struggle between the Legislature and the Judiciary,” Representative Farr wrote.

“For the record, I would also note that the current call for reconsideration is yet another example of the partisan nature of this investigation. Republican members of the committee were not consulted prior to the issuance of this subpoena, nor were we consulted about this motion for reconsideration,” Representative Farr wrote.